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SIPDIS
DEPARTMENT FOR EUR/ACE
DEPARTMENT FOR PM/PPA JOHANNA KNOCH
DEPARTMENT FOR PM/PPA SCOTT KWAK
JCS J5 FOR COL MIETUS
SECDEF FOR LT COL FENTON
EUCOM FOR MAJ KLINGMAN

E.O. 12958: N/A

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SUBJECT: FY10 1206 FUNDS REQUEST FOR ESTONIAN UAV AND INDIRECT FIRE
CAPABILITY ENHANCEMENT NEEDS

REF: STATE 92407; TALLINN 297

¶1. This cable is a correction to Tallinn 297, adding an additional request for UAVs.

¶2. Post has submitted a request for 3.24 million USD in 1206 funding to increase materially Estonian UAV tactical intelligence and indirect fire capabilities for current and future NATO ISAF, counter-terror, and other operations in key theaters worldwide. The Charge d'Affaires has approved this request. Post's Office of Defense Cooperation delivered the completed submission templates to EUCOM.

¶3. During the ODC Chief's November visit to Afghanistan (as part of the Estonian CHOD's delegation), he witnessed the effectiveness of the Raven UAV in collecting real time intelligence for the Estonians deployed side-by-side with U.S. Marines in Helmand province... Estonia does not currently have any UAV capability of its own, and must rely on equipment borrowed from other militaries. National UAV capabilities would greatly enhance the effectiveness of current and future Estonian military operations and will immediately and positively enhance the safety of ISAF and Afghan National Security Forces operating in the area. Estonia also faces a critical need for replacement of current 81mm mortar systems that are rapidly nearing the end of their life cycle. The majority of the deployed Estonian Forces operate as a light infantry organization. As such the 81mm mortars are their primary indirect fire capability at that level and they rely heavily on this equipment in their overseas deployments.

¶4. The Estonian military currently has nine percent of its forces deployed on NATO missions abroad - perhaps the highest level of any NATO member. The GOE is looking for additional deployment opportunities, particularly any that would allow their military to jointly deploy with U.S. forces. Estonia deployed troops to Iraq from 2003 to 2008 (withdrawing them only after Iraq would not negotiate a separate SOFA with Estonia), and has participated in KFOR since 1999. The Estonian military has supported operations in Afghanistan since 2002, and currently has one infantry company conducting counter-terrorism operations in Helmand Province. Estonian forces operate without any caveats. Afghanistan is Estonia's main military and foreign policy priority, and the GOE is seeking ways to increase its contributions to peace and security. Continued deployments are part of EDF and Estonian MOD policy.

Estonia also maintains smaller contributions in Bosnia, Iraq (NTM-I), the Middle East (UNTSO) and NRF-13. In using 1206 funds to support the Estonian military, the USG will significantly enhance this NATO partner's ability to effectively operate in stability operations abroad and provide a significant improvement to Estonia's regional defense capabilities. Moreover, given the Estonian military's intense desire to work with U.S. forces, providing this support will directly assist in U.S. operations.

¶5. Post is not aware of any credible evidence of gross violations of human rights by the units

proposed to receive assistance.

¶6. ODC Estonia POC for this project is LTC Robert R. Williams at 372-607-7652, rwilliams@san.osd.mil or Williamsrr@state.sgov.gov.
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